

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the Office Action of October 2, 2006. This Request for Reconsideration is in full response thereto. Thus, Applicants respectfully request continued examination and allowance of the application.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Thieblin, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,780,319). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection because Thieblin, et al. fails to disclose all of the claim limitations, including: a) injection of an ozone-containing gas into an aeration tank containing aqueous effluent; and b) ozone present in an ozone-containing gas at a level of at least about 2.5 mg per liter of the ozone-containing gas.

As seen in Figures 1-3 and at column 3, line 22 through column 4, line 22, Thieblin et al. discloses a biological reactor 2 (disclosed as especially an aeration tank) in which sludge is withdrawn from reactor 2 by loop 6 and into sludge ozonation system 7 where it is then treated with ozone. Thus, it is quite clear that Thieblin does not disclose injection of an ozone-containing gas into an aeration tank containing aqueous effluent. Rather, any ozone treatment of Thieblin et al. occurs outside an aeration tank and is performed upon sludge, not upon aqueous effluent.

While Applicants recognize that Thieblin et al. does disclose an ozone concentration, they kindly point out that it is expressed in terms of weight ozone per weight suspended matter, not in terms of weight ozone per volume of ozone-containing gas. In order that they can best respond to the Examiner's arguments, Applicants respectfully ask him to please explain why he concluded the claimed ozone concentration is anticipated by Thieblin et al.

Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that Thieblin et al. fails to disclose injection of an ozone-containing gas into an aeration tank containing aqueous effluent or the

claimed ozone concentration in the ozone-containing gas. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 8-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Thieblin, et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection because Thieblin et al. fails to disclose all of the claimed limitations as explained above.

Should the examiner believe a telephone call would expedite the prosecution of the application, she is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below. Applicants have contemporaneously submitted a Petition for a Two Month Extension of Time along with the associated fee. Otherwise, it is not believed that any fee is due at this time. If that belief is incorrect, please debit deposit account number 01-1375. Also, the Commissioner is authorized to credit any overpayment to deposit account number 01-1375.

Respectfully submitted,

/signature/
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